

# AN INTRODUCTION TO EVICTIONS

## CHARLOTTE - MECKLENBURG EVICTIONS PART 1

RELEASED SEPTEMBER 2017



This toolkit is designed to help you take the information from the report, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Evictions Part 1: An Introduction to Evictions in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and convert it into action.

The report provides information on evictions in Mecklenburg County, including an overview of the process and local data on formal evictions that take place through the court system. This is the first study to examine evictions in Mecklenburg County.

UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute prepared the report as part of the Housing Instability and Homelessness Report Series funded by Mecklenburg County Community Support Services.

## WHAT IS AN EVICTION?

An eviction is defined as an action to force a tenant with a written or oral lease to move from the premises where they reside. Evictions can be formal or informal. Formal evictions involve a legal process in which landlords attempt to regain possession of a premises from a tenant. Informal evictions happen outside of the court system. Data in the report refer to formal evictions and are likely an undercount of all evictions in Mecklenburg County.

### FACING FORMAL EVICTION

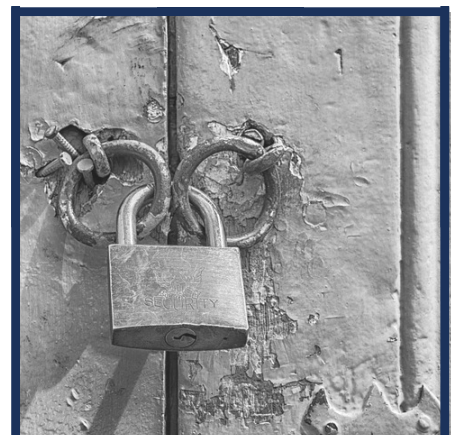
**28,471** households faced formal evictions in Mecklenburg County in FY2015/2016. **162,355** households were at risk of facing eviction in North Carolina in FY2015/2016.

### FACING COST BURDEN

**79,252** renter households are cost burdened in Mecklenburg County, paying more than 30% of income on housing. **45%** of renter households were cost burdened in Mecklenburg County in 2015.

### DISPARITIES IN EVICTION EXIST

**Low-income black women** are disproportionately impacted by evictions. **Families with children** are more likely to be evicted. **Employment** and **rental history** are two predictors of eviction.



**10,556** writs of possession were received by the Sheriff's Office to secure and padlock units in Mecklenburg County in FY2014/2015.

# WHY IT MATTERS

## THE IMPACT

**Evictions are connected to housing instability and homelessness.** Through the process of eviction, households become caught in a vicious cycle where losing housing becomes a barrier to obtaining housing. Matthew Desmond, author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, describes eviction as a cause and condition of poverty. The impact of an eviction goes beyond housing. It can negatively affect overall health and well-being of individuals, educational attainment of children and neighborhood stability.



Photo Source: US Department of Education, August 2013



Photo Source: KOMUnews, February 2014

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

## EDUCATION ON LEGAL RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Homeless Prevention Project (HPP)** is a partnership between Legal Aid of North Carolina, Inc. and Crisis Assistance Ministry. HPP seeks to prevent homelessness by educating low-income tenants who are facing eviction on the legal rights of tenants in North Carolina. There are several legal protections in place at the federal and state level to safeguard tenant rights, but, many tenants facing eviction are unaware of their rights and most do not have legal representation. Legal Aid of North Carolina is able to provide legal representation for only 400 cases out of almost 30,000 households facing formal evictions each year.

HPP sends trained volunteers called Housing Counselors to Crisis Assistance Ministry to give presentations on tenant rights and answer questions about the eviction process.

## VOLUNTEER

**Housing Counselors volunteer Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.**

If you are interested in volunteering with HPP, please contact Hannah Guerrier, Housing Attorney with Legal Aid, for more information. 704.971.2590 / [hannah@legalaidnc.org](mailto:hannah@legalaidnc.org)



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